

Of these, 9,828,294 or 10.7 per cent. are Negroes. The growth in white population between 1900 and 1910 is 14,923,491 or 22.3 per cent.; of the Negro population, 994,300, or 11.3 per cent. But the large increase in the white population has been made possible by the 5,000,000 immigrants who were not here in 1900; if this number is deducted from the increase in the white population, the increase of whites becomes less than 10,000,000 instead of 14,923,491, while the percentage of increase is not quite 15 per cent. As the bulletin says: "This figure, 15 per cent., is fairly comparable with the 11.3 per cent. by which the Negroes have increased, since each percentage may be accepted as representing approximately the natural rate of increase; that is, the increase resulting from the excess of births over deaths." For a people increasing entirely by excess of births over deaths, an increase of 11.3 per cent. is indicative of a normal growth. It is interesting to note that the 1911 census of England has just announced an increase for the English people of 12.4 per cent. by excess of births over deaths in the period 1901 to 1911. The similarity of these two rates is an indication of the accuracy of the 1910 census as well as an evidence of the normal character of increase for the Negroes during the last ten years.

James Derham

IT has not remained for the post-slavery era to produce examples demonstrating the capacity of the American Negro to assimilate and practice the highest and best in medicine and surgery.

James Derham, born a slave, lived in the latter part of the 18th century. To the credit of the Fates, his owner, so it is recorded, was a physician in Philadelphia. In 1788 he was sold to a prominent surgeon of New Orleans. Derham showed such marvelous aptitude in grasping the principles and art of surgery that while still a youth he received his freedom and was permitted to practice amongst the freemen and the slaves. His biographer tells us that at 21, he was a "distinguished surgeon" and was sought by the aristocrats of the South. And mind you, this Negro physician was none of the voodoo cult or other superstitious class; he is said to have been a man of brilliant intellect and he spoke fluently English, French and Spanish.

We are fortunate in finding a eulogy of him by Dr. Benjamin Rush, one of the Nestors of Medicine in America and a man known wherever medical history is read. Dr. Rush visited New Orleans at about the end of the 18th century, and he made it his pleasure to meet and converse with Derham. He speaks thus in reference to him:

"I conversed with him on medicine and surgery and found him learned. I thought I could give him information concerning the treatment of disease, but I learned more from him than he could expect from me."

For this precious bit of biography we are indebted to a volume entitled, "The Literature of Negroes," written by a Frenchman named Gregoire (translated into English in 1810). A further research into the life and work of this interesting figure would form a splendid "labour of love" for some of the members of the professions living in New Orleans.